MOM JEANS ARE ACTUALLY COOL NOW?

BLAME NORMCORE FOR THIS SURPRISE COMEBACK. PAGE 14

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Upskirt photos OK in eyes of law: SJC ruling

Legal loophole. Michael Robinson, 31, who allegedly took cell phone pictures up women's skirts on the MBTA in 2010, gets charges dropped on a technicality. **Unacceptable.** Lawmakers, with the support of advocacy groups and transit police, express outrage, promise to rewrite the statute as soon as possible. PAGE 02

Dating. Even if you're gay and I'm not, marry me!

PAGE 15

Music. The Avett Brothers hit the road again

PAGE 16

TEN-SPOT for a T stop PAGE 06

A petition by a group of young people seeking a deeply discounted Charlie Card for students is gaining support. / NICOLAUS CZARNECKI, METRO

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1 NEWS

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Does Justin Bieber drive you crazy? How involved should the United States be in the crisis between Russia and Ukraine? What's the best way to resolve the conflict between the LGBT community and the organizers of the Southie St. Patrick's Day Parade? We we want you to tell us! There's no better way to have your opinion heard than sharing it with hundreds of thousands of Metro readers. Send your thoughts to us at letters@metro.us. Please keep it as brief as possible, preferably less than 100 words, and include your name and contact info. Be sure to watch for your letter in an upcoming edition of Metro or on Metro.us.

Today's tweet

"The best part about going to school in Boston is that every sports metaphor in class involves Red Sox players"

To that, @jeurdz, we say: Go Sox!

Legislators vow to remedy 'upskirting' law loophole

Peeping Toms. A court ruled that it is legal to photograph up women's skirts and dresses.

Quoted

"I am in disbelief that the courts would come to this kind of decision and outraged at what it means for women's privacy and public safety in the Commonwealth."

Therese Murray, Senate President

Suffolk County District Attorney Dan Conley expresses his disappointment with the SJC's ruling at a press conference Wednesday. / NICOLAUS CZARNECKI, METRO

Outrage ensued Wednesday after the state's highest court ruled that a man who secretly photographed up the skirts of women riding the MBTA did not violate state law because the women were not "nude or partially nude."

The Supreme Judicial Court threw out the state's charges against Michael Robertson, 31, of Arlington, who took photos and video up female riders' skirts and dresses as they traveled on the Green Line in 2010.

The ruling was based on the argument that women did not have a legal expectation of privacy on the trolley, like they would in a locker room, for example, and were not partially nude as defined under current law.

Transit Police arrested Robertson in an August 2010 sting after receiving reports that he was using his cell phone to capture the images. Robertson filed a motion to dismiss the case. A Boston Municipal Court judge denied that motion, but the high court disagreed.

"[W]e interpret the phrase, 'a person who is … partially nude' in the same way that the defendant does, namely, to mean a person who is partially clothed but who has one or more of the private parts of the body exposed in plain view at the time that the putative defendant secretly photographs her," Justice Margot Botsford wrote in the eight-page decision. "A female passenger on a MBTA trolley who is wearing a skirt, dress or the like covering these parts of her body is not a person who is 'partially nude,' no matter what is or is not underneath the skirt by way of underwear or other clothing."

A spokesman for Suffolk County District Attorney Daniel Conley called the decision a "blow to privacy," a sentiment echoed by Senate President Therese Murray, who said she was "stunned and disappointed" by the ruling.

"We have fought too hard and too long for women's rights to take the step backward that they did today. I am in disbelief that the courts would come to this kind of decision and outraged at what it means for women's privacy and public safety in the Commonwealth," said Murray.

"I will speak with the members [Thursday] in caucus and the Senate will act swiftly. Massachusetts is better than this," Murray said.

MBTA Spokesman Joe Pesaturo said Transit Police support efforts to work with the legislature in rewriting the statute.

"The good news is that everyone seems to be on the right side of this issue — that the law needs to be reformed, and I think that it will move quickly," said Gina Scaramella, the executive director of the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, which has worked to extinguish sexual harassment on the T.

"This is a form of sexual harassment that shouldn't be tolerated, and we're very glad that there will be swift action to make this awful behavior illegal behavior," Scaramella said.

MORGAN ROUSSEAU
@METROMORGAN
morgan.rousseau@metro.us

By the numbers

Though unsettling, the underhanded activity doesn't seem to be a widespread problem on the T, which reported six cases of secret photography in 2011, four cases in 2012 and three cases last year.

- To put the numbers in context, there was an average of 395 million passenger trips on the MBTA in each of those years.

Graduation. Bloomberg to be Harvard University commencement speaker

Former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg will give the keynote address during Harvard's 363rd commencement on May 29, the university said Wednesday.

Bloomberg, who was raised in Medford, received his business degree from Harvard Business School in 1966. The school's renovated Baker Library-Bloomberg Center is named for his father.

In 2001, Bloomberg was elected mayor of New York City and served three terms. METRO

Penalty

Drinking probe at Winthrop High

Police in Winthrop said an officer found open containers of alcohol in the high school hockey team's locker room Friday, and they're now questioning both the coaches and players, according to WCVB. Police are reviewing surveillance footage. METRO

Liquor legislation

Sunday morning booze sales OK'd

On a voice vote and with no debate, House lawmakers on Wednesday approved legislation authorizing Sunday morning alcohol sales. The bill, which strikes the word "noon" and replaces it with "10 a.m." in the portion of the general laws governing a "common day of rest and legal holidays," now moves to the state Senate. SHNS

HAIR OF THE DOG?
NICOLAUS CZARNECKI, METRO

"I always check the Health Connector for my small business clients."

John Sachetti, left, health insurance broker, with his client Gerald Walba, owner of Plaza Catering and Discovery Café, Boston

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Fallout. SJC: 'Egregious' misconduct at state drug lab compromises pleas

The state's highest court on Wednesday ruled that drug defendants seeking to toss out their guilty pleas can have their cases reviewed because of "egregious" misconduct at a state drug lab.

The unanimous decision by the Supreme Judicial Court focuses on cases impacted by the mishandling of drug evidence by convicted former state chemist Annie Dookhan.

"The defendant is entitled to a conclusive presumption that Dookhan's misconduct occurred in his case, that it was egregious, and that it is attributable to the Commonwealth," Justice Francis Spina wrote in the decision released Wednesday.

Justices rejected a lower court's ruling to allow a defendant to withdraw his guilty plea because Dookhan had been involved in testing the drug evidence in his case. Instead, the SJC sent it back to the lower court to determine if a guilty plea would have still been the result.

A lower court judge should determine whether, "the defendant can demonstrate a reasonable probability that had he known of Dookhan's misconduct, he would not have admitted to sufficient facts and would have insisted on taking his chances at trial," the ruling said. **MICHAEL NAUGHTON**

Drug lab crisis

The ruling comes one day after the state's inspector general released the findings of a 15-month review of the drug lab crisis.

- The report said a former state chemist who tampered with drug evidence samples was a "sole bad actor," but that managers there were "ill-suited to oversee a forensic drug lab."

Nelsons to get first year behind BSO baton

The new music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Andris Nelsons, announced details Wednesday of his first full season as conductor. The announcement was followed by a dress rehearsal of Richard Strauss' opera Salome that included a cast of 17 singers. The rehearsal was in preparation for a one-night-only performance of the opera this evening. Nelsons is the youngest music director to lead the BSO in more than 100 years. He was appointed in May as the 15th music director in the symphony's history. / NICOLAUS CZARNECKI, METRO

St. Patrick's Day

MassEquality 'disappointed' over parade decision

The statewide LGBT advocacy group that had been working with city officials and organizers of the South Boston St. Patrick's Day parade said they were disappointed by the decision not to allow gay groups to march openly.

The statement released Wednesday by MassEquality comes after days of meetings and negotiations meant to work toward an agreement that would allow gay participants to march openly.

MassEquality Executive Director Kara Coredini said in the statement that the group was encouraged to have "an historic opportunity" to meet face-to-face with parade organizers to discuss involving LGBT veterans in the parade. **METRO**

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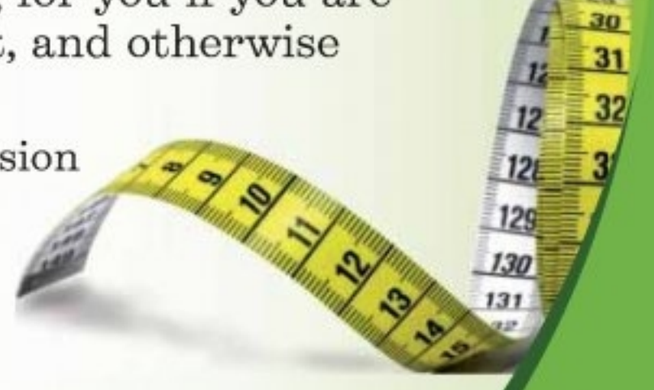

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When asked whether the T would consider a $10 youth pass, a spokeswoman pointed to the already discounted youth pass and said transit officials maintain an active dialogue with activists. / NICOLAUS CZARNECKI, METRO

Youth call for $10 monthly T pass

Demanding action. Young organizers are frustrated with the MBTA's claim that they can't afford to offer the discounted pass.

As MBTA fares stand now, one-third of Boston-area youth between the ages of 12 and 21 can't afford to pay their way to work, school, health care, sports and extra curricular activities, according to organizers behind an escalating push for a $10 monthly MBTA youth pass.

Currently, a $28 monthly pass is available for middle and high school students to purchase, but the Youth Affordabili(T) Coalition says that fare is too costly for teens.

"We polled the youth population, and this is the figure young people feel they can afford," said Coalition Coordinator Caroline Casey, 23.

The group's voice is getting louder, with an online petition collecting nearly 500 signatures and a paper petition collecting hundreds more. Next Wednesday, activists are expected to march from Park Street to MassDOT where they will rally and give testimonials.

Quoted

"They're really angry. They're tired of being told there is no money then reading in the paper that $20 million will go toward late night service because a few yuppies want to get drunk and go home late." Caroline Casey

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Nataliya L., USA Vein Clinics Patient

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Quoted

"Obviously we want to provide NATO's leaders with options that stabilize and not escalate tensions in the Ukraine."

Gen. Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

A U.S. defense official said the Pentagon, in a response to a request from Baltic allies, aimed to provide additional aircraft during the current rotation. / GETTY IMAGES

Pentagon boosts training, NATO air policing amid the Ukraine-Russia crisis

International outcry. Ukraine says Russia has occupied Crimea, where its Black Sea fleet is based.

The U.S. military said on Wednesday it will bolster training with Poland's air force and provide more U.S. aircraft to a NATO air policing mission in the Baltics, as it eyes ways to reassure allies without escalating the Ukraine crisis.

The United States has showed no interest in pursuing military options following the Russian intervention in Crimea. The biggest step the Pentagon had taken so far was to cut off military exchanges with Russia on Monday.

Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a Senate hearing he had directed the U.S. military's European Command to "consult and plan within the construct of the North Atlantic Council" but stressed the intent was to stabilize the situation.

Dempsey said he spoke with his Russian counterpart on Wednesday and urged restraint in the days ahead "in order to preserve room for a diplomatic solution."

Russia and the West are locked in the most serious battle since the end of the Cold War for influence in Ukraine, a former Soviet republic with historic ties to Moscow that is a major commodities exporter and strategic link between East and West.

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, who aimed to speak with Ukraine's defense minister later on Wednesday, said the United States would boost training with Poland's air force. A U.S. defense official said there are about 10 U.S. Air Force personnel in Poland to support rotations of U.S. aircraft for training. REUTERS

Discussions

Kerry: Dignitaries agreed to more talks

Foreign ministers from Ukraine, Russia and Western nations agreed on Wednesday to continue discussions on how to stabilize Ukraine and presented a number of ideas for how to reach that goal, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said.

"We agreed to continue intense discussions in the coming days with Russia, with Ukraine, in order to see how we can help normalize the situation, stabilize it, and overcome the crisis," Kerry said. REUTERS

Rare show of support from GOP

Lawmakers consider vote on aid package

Republican leaders in the U.S. House of Representatives said on Wednesday they would work with the White House to address the crisis in Ukraine and vote on legislation offering financial aid soon.

House Majority Leader Eric Cantor said the Republican-led House will consider a $1 billion loan guarantee package for Ukraine and look at measures to "put significant pressure on Russia to stop the flagrant aggression. REUTERS

Online sales

Facebook, Instagram crack down on gun sales

Facebook and its photo sharing subsidiary, Instagram, will delete posts offering to buy or sell guns without background checks, Facebook announced on Wednesday.

In an effort to curb what gun control advocates say is the increasing use of the social networks to circumvent checks and controls on firearms sales, Facebook and Instagram will also bar users under 18 from viewing gun offers that are posted.

"We will not permit people to post offers to sell regulated items that indicate a willingness to evade or help others evade the law," Facebook said. REUTERS

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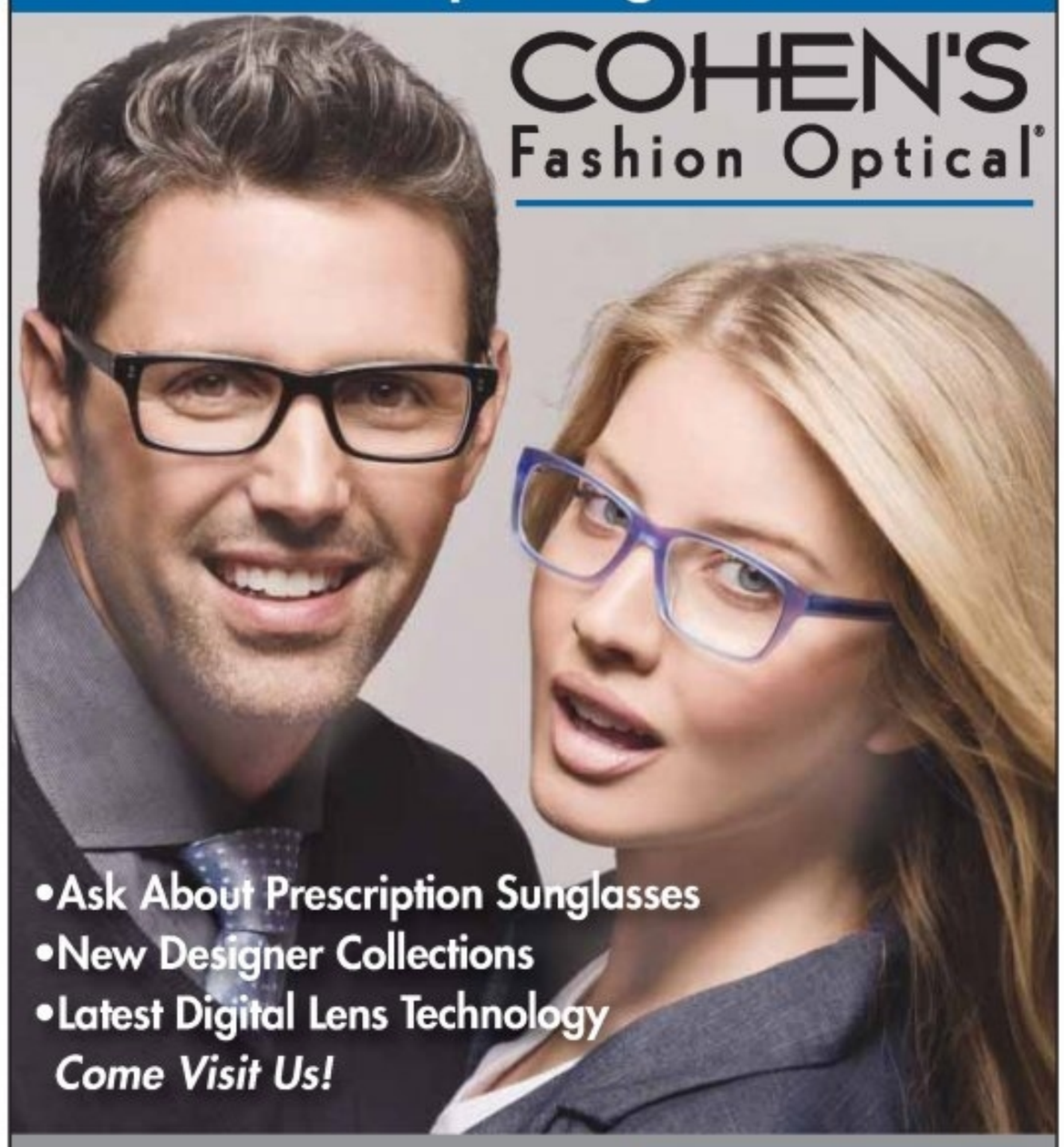

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Hearing on IRS scandal ends in shouting match

Turmoil. Dems accused the GOP of a one-sided investigation into the so-called Tea Party targeting scandal.

A brief congressional hearing ended in shouting and confusion on Wednesday after a former Internal Revenue Service official refused to answer questions about a 10-month-old controversy involving IRS scrutiny of conservative political groups.

Lois Lerner, who was at the center of last year's so-called Tea Party targeting scandal, declined to answer questions from Darrell Issa, the Republican chairman of the House of Representatives Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

Accusing Republicans of running a one-sided investigation, Rep. Elijah Cummings, the panel's top democrat, shouted after his microphone was turned off: "It is absolutely un-American!" Other committee Democrats shouted "shame" as Issa left the hearing room.

Lerner retired from the IRS in September. She had refused to answer questions from Issa once before, at a hearing in May 2013, where she invoked her constitutional right not to testify.

That was days after she issued a public apology, in answer to a planted question from the audience at a legal conference, in which she said the IRS had done "inappropriate" targeting of political groups with the words "Tea Party" in their names. REUTERS

By the numbers

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Issa, who has relentlessly pursued the tax agency over the controversy for months, dismissed Lerner and gaveled the hearing to a close after just 15 minutes, cutting off remarks from Democratic Rep. Elijah Cummings.

Poll shows Christie's Sandy response image hit by Bridgegate controversy

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, whose popularity with voters in his home state has already taken a hit over a traffic jam scandal, has also lost some of the goodwill he earned for his response to superstorm Sandy in 2012, according to a new poll. In January, accusations surfaced that Christie's aides had tied storm assistance to a political favor. Those accusations, along with the traffic jam scandal, have taken a toll on state residents' impression of Christie's handling of the devastating storm, with just 54 percent of New Jersey voters now saying they approved of his efforts after Sandy. REUTERS / GETTY IMAGES

National debate

Western GOP urges appeals court to back gay marriage

Republicans from western states are urging a U.S. appeals court to rule state bans on gay marriage unconstitutional, citing shifts in the cultural standpoints of some conservatives in a broad national debate.

Former U.S. senators Alan Simpson of Wyoming and Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas were among some 20 Republicans who signed a brief filed with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit in Denver. The group cited constitutional guarantees of equal protection.

The court is to hear cases from Utah and Oklahoma, where federal courts have ruled state bans on same-sex marriage were unconstitutional. REUTERS

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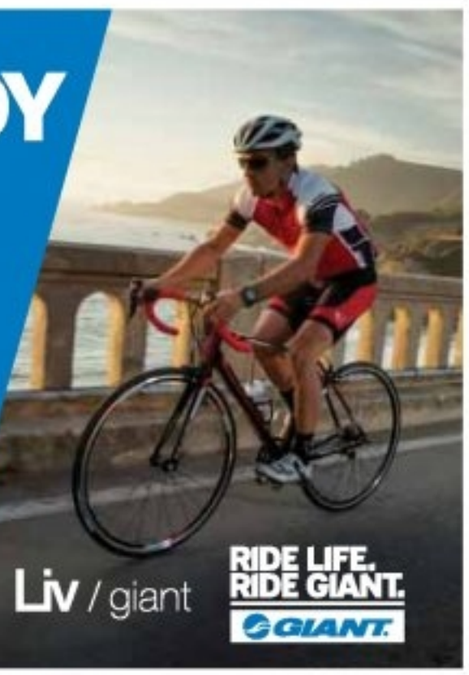
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SPECIAL ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE PAGE

U.S. Gov't Issued coins go to residents in 12 MA counties

Vault Bags loaded with rarely seen U.S. Gov't issued coins are actually being handed over to Massachusetts residents who find their county listed below, but only those who beat the 48 hour deadline are getting the Vault Bags of nearly 100 year old Gov't issued coins for just $59

MASSACHUSETTS - The phones are ringing off the hook.

That's because for the next 48 hours Vault Bags loaded with rarely seen Indian Head coins issued by the U.S. Gov't nearly 100 years ago are being released to Massachusetts residents who find their county highlighted in black on the Distribution Map printed in today's publication.

Everyone is rushing to get the Vault Bags because each one is loaded with nearly a quarter pound of rarely seen Indian Head coins dating all the way back to the early 1900s.

"It's hard to tell how much these heavy Vault Bags could be worth someday. That's because after they were filled with U.S. Gov't issued coins, the bags were sealed for good," said Timothy J. Shissler, Director of Vault Operations for the private World Reserve.

Since this advertising announcement can't stop collectors from hoarding all the rarely seen coins they can get, the World Reserve has imposed a strict limit of 10 Vault Bags per resident.

That's why it's important that residents call the National Distribution Hotlines beginning at precisely 8:30am this morning.

Everyone who does is getting the Vault Bags loaded with rarely seen coins issued by the U.S. Gov't nearly 100 years ago for just $59 and shipping and handling, which is a real steal since there's no telling what just one scarce and highly collectible Indian Head coin alone could be worth in collector value. And here's the best part. Everyone who claims four Vault Bags before all the money is gone is getting free shipping and free handling.

"We're bracing for all the calls because there are just hours left for residents to get the Vault Bags," Shissler said.

So, Massachusetts residents who find their county highlighted in black on the Distribution Map below need to immediately call the National Distribution Hotlines before the 48-hour deadline ends to get the Vault Bags. If lines are busy keep trying, all calls will be answered. ■

■ **RARELY SEEN U.S. COINS LEAVE VAULT:** These packages containing Vault Bags loaded with valuable Indian Head coins issued by the U.S. Gov't nearly 100 years ago are being moved from the private vaults of the World Reserve for immediate distribution to Massachusetts residents.

■ **U.S. GOV'T ISSUED COINS:** These bags are loaded with rarely seen Indian Head coins that everyone is rushing to get for just $59. That's because everyone who beats the 48-hour deadline to claim four bags is getting free shipping and free handling.

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How to get the bags of U.S. Gov't issued coins

Shown to the left in black are the Massachusetts counties that get the Vault Bags. If you live in one of the counties highlighted in black immediately call the National Distribution Hotline before the 48 hour deadline ends at: **1-866-210-2218**

Who gets the Vault Bags: Shown below are the Massachusetts counties that get the Vault Bags. If you live in one of the counties highlighted in black immediately call the National Distribution Hotline at: **1-866-210-2218**

How much are the Vault Bags worth: Coin values always fluctuate and there are never any guarantees, but here's why residents are rushing to claim the Vault Bags before they're all gone. After the Vault Bags were loaded with rarely seen coins issued by the U.S. Gov't they were sealed for good. That means there's no telling what you'll find until you sort through all the coins. So you better believe at just $59 and shipping the Vault Bag fee is a real steal, since there's no telling what just one scarce and highly collectible Indian Head coin alone could be worth in collector value.

Why is the Vault Bag fee so low: Because thousands of U.S. residents have missed the deadline to claim the money, the World Reserve has reallocated Vault Bags that will be scheduled to be sent out in the next 48 hours. That means the money is up for grabs and now any resident who finds their county highlighted in black on the Distribution Map printed in today's publication gets to claim the Vault Bags of money for themselves and keep all the U.S. Gov't issued coins found inside. Each Vault Bag loaded with nearly a quarter pound of rarely seen Indian Head coins is set at $78 for residents who miss the deadline, but for those who beat the 48-hour deadline the Vault Bag fee is just $59 and the best part is everyone who claims four Vault Bags before all the money is gone is getting free shipping and free handling as long as they call the National Distribution Hotline before the deadline ends.

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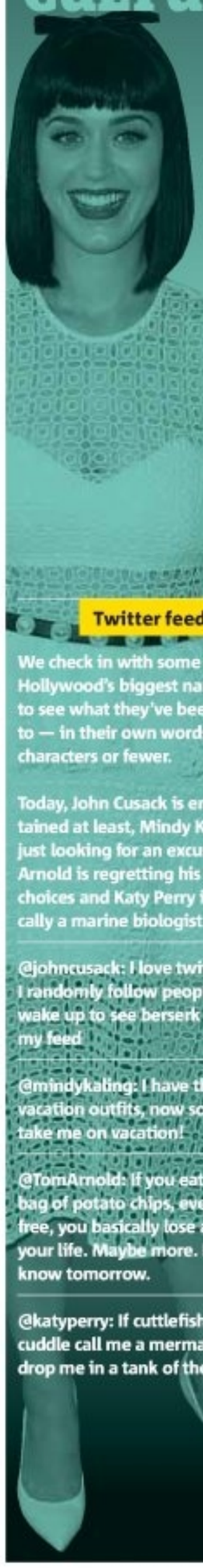

Twitter feed

We check in with some of Hollywood's biggest names to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or fewer.

Today, John Cusack is entertained at least, Mindy Kaling is just looking for an excuse, Tom Arnold is regretting his lunch choices and Katy Perry is practically a marine biologist.

@johncusack: I love twitter when I randomly follow people and wake up to see berserk things on my feed

@mindykaling: I have the best vacation outfits, now someone take me on vacation!

@TomArnold: If you eat a whole bag of potato chips, even gluten-free, you basically lose a day of your life. Maybe more. I'll let you know tomorrow.

@katyperry: If cuttlefish really cuddle call me a mermaid and drop me in a tank of them pls.

1

Travolta is over Adele Dazeem

Jorn Tromolto is working on letting it go.

John Travolta is sorry for messing up Idina Menzel's name at the Oscars on Sunday, where he introduced her as "Adele Dazeem." Also, though, he's over it.

"I've been beating myself up all day," Travolta said in a statement, according to People. "Then I thought, 'What would Idina Menzel say?' She'd say, 'Let it go, let it go!'" [Ed note: Good luck with that.]

Indeed, it seems like the "Frozen" star doesn't hold a grudge — she gave Travolta a hug after her performance of "Let It Go."

The Internet, on the other hand, has no plans to stop enjoying Travolta's flub anytime soon. Not only did an Adele Dazeem Twitter account instantly spring into existence, but you can now Travoltify your name (just call me Melissa Thozomas, writer for Marco).

MELINDA TAUB

THE WORD

Dorothy Robinson takes on the world of gossip.

DOROTHY ROBINSON
@dorothyatmetro
dorothy.robinson@metro.us

3

Conan O'Brien will host MTV's 2014 Movie Awards

He may have lost "The Tonight Show," but at least a certain redhead can find comfort in the arms of MTV. Conan O'Brien will host the 2014 MTV Movie Awards next month in Los Angeles, he announced during "Conan" on Tuesday night.

"After eight years of intense negotiations, I am honored to announce I am hosting MTV's second-most prestigious awards show," he joked.

The show will take place April 13 at the Nokia Theater in Los Angeles.

Conan O'Brien

Talking points

If you looked like these two, you'd want to make lots of babies, too.
GETTY IMAGES

McConaughey on makin' babies

Don't be surprised if Matthew McConaughey names his next kid Oscar, as the newly minted Academy Award winner had just one thing on his mind following his win for Best Actor Sunday night. "We won't stay long at the after-party," he told the Sun. "I want to go home and make another baby." McConaughey and wife Camila Alves are already parents to 5-year-old Levi, 4-year-old Vida and 14-month-old Livingston.

No Bieber peen for Web

Miami police are going to give the public a look at just about all of Justin Bieber — minus one detail — when they release additional video clips from his Jan. 23 arrest for DUI, resisting arrest and driving with an expired license, according to E! News. Bieber's genitals can be seen in two of the clips in question, taken while the beleaguered pop star submitted to a urine test that later showed he had marijuana and Xanax in his system, so police are taking steps to censoring the clips before they are released. "Mr. Bieber's right to privacy is paramount," a police spokesman says. "He has not lost his right to privacy, and that is what is important here." The department has already released 18 photos cataloging Bieber's extensive collection of tattoos and a police report in which the singer is described as being "excited, talkative, profane, cooperative, insulting and cocky" during his time with them.

Perry not into Cyrus tongue tie

Katy Perry kissed another girl, and this time she wasn't that into it. While visiting Australian talk show "Sunrise" this week, Perry recounted her close encounter with Miley Cyrus at the "Bangerz" singer's concert in L.A. "I just walked up to her to give her, like, a friendly, girly kiss. You know, as girls do," Perry said. "And then she, like, tried to move her head and go deeper and I pulled away. God knows where that tongue has been."

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Watch out for that sword!

We're sad to say that shortly after this photo was taken, an unsuspecting Eva Green died from injuries sustained from having a giant knife cut through her head by a very angry (yet very buff) Greek warrior. (Just kidding — she was just posing in front of a terrible spot while at the premiere of her new film "300: Rise of an Empire" on Tuesday in Hollywood.) Next time, the publicist should put her somewhere where it doesn't look like a giant knife is going directly into her skull. A wall, perhaps?

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Netflix sensation. Sakina Jaffrey says she boned up on politics to take a role in 'House of Cards'

"She's just ferocious in her belief that she's right," says Jaffrey of her character. / NETFLIX

On Netflix's hugely popular drama "House of Cards," Sakina Jaffrey plays White House Chief of Staff Linda Vasquez. In the series she's the first woman and Latina to take on this job. Unfortunately for Vasquez, she's also one of the reasons why Kevin Spacey's Frank Underwood formulates a master plan.

What kind of research did you do before the show?
I watched interviews with [former Secretary of State] Condi Rice, and read her book as well as Hillary Clinton's book. I read Lyndon B. Johnson's book, which Kevin actually gave me last year just to know what type of character he was playing.

Your character was part of the reason why he came up with his master plan. One of the things I love about Linda is that she's just ferocious in her belief that she's right. Her job is to protect the president and she'll do it at all costs.

Are you into politics?
My husband [Francis Wilkinson] has been involved in politics both as a journalist and a political consultant. When [Bill] Clinton was inaugurated, we moved to Washington for three years because he was a political correspondent for Rolling Stone. So the truth is, I sleep next to a man that can fill me in if I don't know what's going on all the time.

What do your kids think of you being on the show?
I have a teenage boy and a teenage girl. Their friends have watched the show and learned about politics through it. So I've gotten to be a little bit of a cool mom. For once in my life, I'm cool.

Are we going to see you in season three?
I can't tell you anything, but I think that no one ever really leaves Washington. ... Relationships are really the currency in Washington, right? LASSE EMIL KRISTIANSEN

Q&A

Brainy women

There are a lot of strong female characters in this series. Was that something that attracted you to the project?
I give total credit to [show creator] Beau Willimon for creating these brainy women — not just smart and powerful, but actually intellectually very advanced.

TV Watch list

COMEDY

'Big Bang Theory'

The title of this particular episode is "The Friendship Turbulence," which is a good indication of the heavy stuff going down: When Sheldon and Wolowitz start hurling insults at each other it means

JIM PARSONS PLAYS SHELDON. /CBS

Bernadette has to play peacemaker and try to patch things up between the two. Meanwhile, Penny lands a potentially embarrassing movie role, and Raj asks Amy to help him write a note to a woman, so that he doesn't have to. This sounds like a lot of "Bang" for one half-hour episode, but we trust these writers to pull it off. CBS, 8 P.M.

'Parks and Recreation'

Plans are underway for the big benefit concert Leslie's new young task force has planned, as Tom and Ben meet with potential corporate sponsors. Leslie is met with some unexpected life turns, and Ron brings a surprise to the office. NBC, 8:30 P.M. KASIA PILAT

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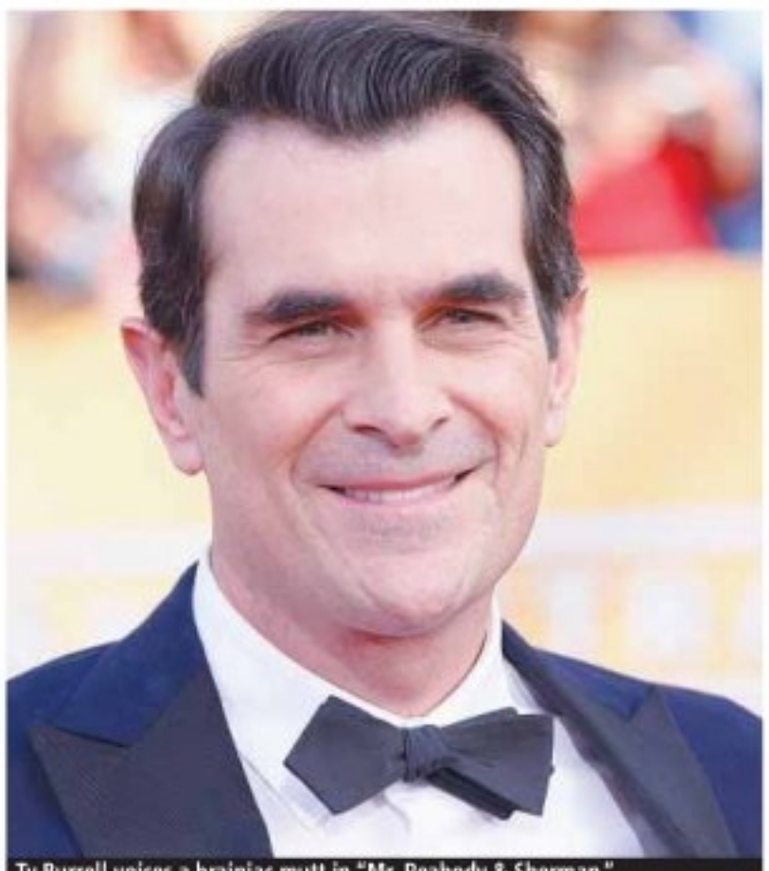
A genius for a day

Interview. "Modern Family" dad Ty Burrell becomes a canine brainiac in "Mr. Peabody & Sherman."



Ty Burrell voices a brainiac mutt in "Mr. Peabody & Sherman," which opens Friday. / WIREMAGIC

Since 2009, Ty Burrell has been a fixture on television as the bumbling but well-meaning paterfamilias on "Modern Family." But with "Mr. Peabody & Sherman," he disappears behind the titular cartoon mutt who, as on the history-themed segments on "The Rocky and Bullwinkle Show," is an anthropomorphic brainiac with an adopted son (voiced by Max Charles).

Bill Scott, who originally voiced Mr. Peabody, had a distinctive delivery. How closely did you mimic him?
Initially a lot. I was really trying to keep as many of his cadences as I could. We kind of discovered that it didn't work for the more heart-to-heart stuff between Peabody and Sherman. If you remember the originals, they're very witty and very glib. It's five minutes and it's a history lesson. ... But we had to ground the voice so that when those scenes came along, it didn't seem like they came out of nowhere.

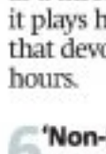
You have a lot of scientific terms to rattle off here. Were you a nerd?
No, no. That's why I deserve an Oscar — three Oscars! Just being able to pretend that I'm a genius for two minutes is the greatest stretch ever captured on film. I lost to the words more than I won. Usually I'd get one take where I could get "synchronic fundibulator" without messing it up.

Usually you're working with your fellow actors, but voicework tends to be recorded individually...
That's an unusual part of it, for sure. Although Max and I did have a day where we worked together. We tried to hit the scenes that were the most heart-to-heart. They usually prefer to keep you separated, so they can cut cleanly.

Q&A

Hit show

"Modern Family" is one of many shows made to look like it's partly improvised. How overstated is its reliance on ad-libbing?
We certainly don't improvise as much as people think we do. That's a product of the style. It's more of an editors' field. The editors get to contribute more, because it has looser ends to it. The editor gets to shape our show more than old comedies used to. But if you can beat a joke, which is hard with our writers, because our writers are very good — if you can beat them, they use it.



MATT PRIGGE
@MATTPRIGGE
matt.prigge@metro.us

ADMIT ONE

Metro rounds up what's in cinemas this week.

MATT PRIGGE
matt.prigge@metro.us

The gym bunnies who didn't die in "300" return for "300: Rise of an Empire." WARNER BROS. PICTURES

1 '300: Rise of an Empire' Zack Snyder's homophobic yet homoerotic Spartan bloodbath gets a belated sequel, or a rather side-sequel. The less chronicled Battle of Artemisium is the focus this time, and best of all there's Eva Green as a warrior queen who likes to make out with freshly decapitated heads..

2 'Mr. Peabody & Sherman' Rocky and Bullwinkle don't have the greatest track record when it comes to movies. But here we go again, with the history-themed dog-and-boy segments transformed into a time travel movie.

3 'Elaine Stritch: Shoot Me' Elaine Stritch, now 89, hasn't called it quits, even though she did leave New York for Birmingham, Mich. This documentary catches her before her move, looking back on her long, illustrious and often salty life.

4 'Bethlehem' Another film from the Israeli-Palestinian front, this drama centers on the relationship between an Israeli Secret Service officer and his teenage Palestinian informant.

5 'Generation War' This epic look at five German friends who embark on five diverse paths during WWII was originally screened in its homeland as a three-part miniseries, but it plays here as a two-part epic that devours four and a half hours.

6 'Non-Stop' Charles Bronson was still making "Death Wish" pictures at 73, so Liam Neeson still has another 12 years to make movies like "Non-Stop." This time he's an alkie air marshal who finds there's a killer on his latest flight. MATT PRIGGE

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"We're really in the zone right now as far as making up stuff on the spot," says Stoops, far left. / PROVIDED

Jam band. Vermont four-piece find their groove anew.

When a band takes long instrumental tangents, there's a lot that can go wrong. After those initial three minutes of jamming, things can start to become stagnant if the right groove isn't there. This has never been an issue for grandiose rockers RAQ, who, despite always delving into long jams onstage, carve out melodies and harmonies that are both chaotic and also completely and utterly organized at the same time. And although RAQ has drawn close comparisons to bygone jam-rock purveyors like Phish, this Vermont four-piece combines funk and psychedelic influences into a highly addictive package that finds its contents timeless and ripe, all the while steering clear of copyism.

"Our sound is a product of doing something for a decade or more and finding your own voice," says keyboardist Todd Stoops. "As a band, I think it comes from the individuals creating their own styles and a sound that is their own. We all have our unique styles and when you put that together, hopefully the band will have a unique sound."

The band's brand of jam music is pure — merging progressive rock stylings and seemingly endless guitar solos — something that organically transpires after sharing the stage with someone for more than 13 years.

"When you're in a band for a long time with somebody, you kind of have an idea of what they're going to do before they even do it," says Stoops. "There's this weird telepathy going on where I can look over stage left and see Chris [Michetti, guitarist] just kind of give me a look and I know what kind of moves he can make right there. Some of those moments you can kind of speak without having to talk."

If you go

RAQ

Tonight, 8
The Sinclair,
52 Church Street
Cambridge, MA
$17, 617-547-5200
www.ticketmaster.com

ALEX KHATCHADOURIAN
letters@metro.us

Chemistry

Varied experiences

With such insurmountable chemistry and improvisation on stage, it's a shame that RAQ's touring schedule has taken a backseat to the members' other musical projects. Nevertheless, increased touring with their other bands has not only intensified clamor for more RAQ shows from diehard fans, but has also gained popularity among those new fans.

"Our other bands are touring so much that it's popularizing RAQ," says Stoops. "It's like a reverse popularization. We have our core fans, but now there are a lot of new faces in the crowd that I don't think we would have seen had it not been for Chris' project, Conspirator, or my band Kung Fu being on the road. There are a lot of people that are coming out to these shows and have seen the band, like, a hundred times and the person standing next to them, it could be their first. That's kind of neat, to have people with varied experiences with our music throughout the crowd."

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Spring trend: Mom jeans

LEANDRA MEDINE: AKA THE MAN REPELLER

Denim. We round up a selection of the new, unexpected "it" denim.

Sure, we've all made fun of them when looking through old photographs from the '90s and convinced our parents to throw out a pair (or three), but mom jeans — the high-waisted, slightly tapered-leg denim in lighter, faded washes — are making a comeback. First seen on fashion insiders and celebrities who trawl the best vintage stores, the trend has found its way into major retailers like Urban Outfitters and Topshop, making it accessible to you.

But we're not saying to go all old school and style them with a fanny pack and high-top white sneakers. Instead, pair the denim with sexy pumps or laid-back sandals for a fresh take. The higher waistband will elongate legs and accentuate curves — not to mention do away with any unsightly muffin tops and plumber's cracks (not cute).

Model Laura Love paired her jeans with a feminine blouse and sandals at a party with her pal Gia Coppola.
GETTY IMAGES

A baby step toward the trend would be retiring your indigo wash skinnies for a lighter shade of blue, also set to be big for spring. And if you're ready to get on board, here are a few pairs we love.

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$176, MIH-JEANS.COM

TOPSHOP
MOTO BABY BLUE JEANS
$70, TOPSHOP.COM

RAG & BONE
THE MARILYN RIGID JEANS
$275, SHOPBOP.COM

ACNE STUDIOS
NEEDLE RELAX JEANS
$250, ACNESTUDIOS.COM

BDG THE MOM JEANS
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A new day at Louis Vuitton

Nicolas Ghesquiere, long known for his flair for the experimental, kept it somewhat low-key for his debut collection for Louis Vuitton. There wasn't any grand set design or theatrics. Instead, the designer let his clothes take center stage, creating his own unique spin on the season's ubiquitous '60s trend.

The theme surfaced in his above-the-knee, A-line skirts and dresses, feminine blouses with lace-trimmed collars and high-waist skinny pants — all conveying a sense of Parisian chic and sensuality.

The '60s gamine-meets-vixen vibe continued throughout the collection, even during his more futuristic moments such as his slick plunging leather tops that came attached to knit skirts with feathers arranged in artful swirls. This is where his legendary sense of the experimental appeared, and yet the collection as a whole sent a clear message: He's dressing a new woman now, with softer, more commercial looks to prove it.

And since this is, after all, a Louis Vuitton show, the accessories — miniature trunk bags, shiny booties and leather belts tied around the models waists — drove the point home. METRO

Fashion Week diary

Follow our editors' diaries as they take you to the front row of Paris Fashion Week. For more coverage, visit www.metro.us and www.modmods.com.

Love in the time of DOMA (and everything after)

Romance and bureaucracy. Question: How do you prove love? Answer: In the end, it proves itself.

Author Liza Monroy, a self-proclaimed lovefool, gleefully admits her appreciation for the romantic comedy genre in her new memoir, "The Marriage Act." While she isn't deluded by fantasy, she insists that every relationship can be distilled into a rom-com. Take her first marriage — to her gay best friend in 2001, just after 9/11 — for example. "With Emir, everything was so absurd, a comedy of errors," she says. Her book details the set pieces of that story, which includes a cast of characters and series of coincidences that can only be described as filmic. Monroy's friend-turned-husband, Emir, is from a conservative Middle Eastern country and his visa is expiring; he has not yet come out to his family. Meanwhile, the pair fear outing themselves to Monroy's mother, a visa chief for the State Department, and endangering Emir's hopes for a green card. Hilarity — like their Vegas nuptials officiated by an Elvis impersonator — and anxiety — like dodging questions about circumcision at the INS — ensue.

Spoiler alert: As with most rom-coms, their narrative has a happy ending. More than a decade later, Emir remains legally in the U.S., and both of them have found the kind of life partners they had wished for in their early 20s. Moreover, DOMA, the federal law that defined marriage as a union solely between partners of the opposite sex, was struck down last June, meaning that nowadays no one will need to make the same sacrifice that Monroy did for her friend. Although no longer legally bound to Emir, she still loves him, in a way that transcends traditional, silver-screen notions of the word. "We are together forever because our friendship — our sibling-hood — continues," she says.

And while she says everything is different from one relationship to the next, and that her unconventional partnership with Emir wasn't a tutorial for married life, the newlywed has learned over time how to fall in love for real — that is, with oneself first. She offers her advice:

Use your judgment: "Ultimately, when you find the right person, you feel it. You wouldn't even think about needing advice or asking for outside input. Not that you're fully in bliss 24 hours a day, but after a conflict, you never think, 'Maybe I shouldn't be in this relationship.' You know it's not going to work out the minute you bad-mouth your partner to your friends. That's a red flag."

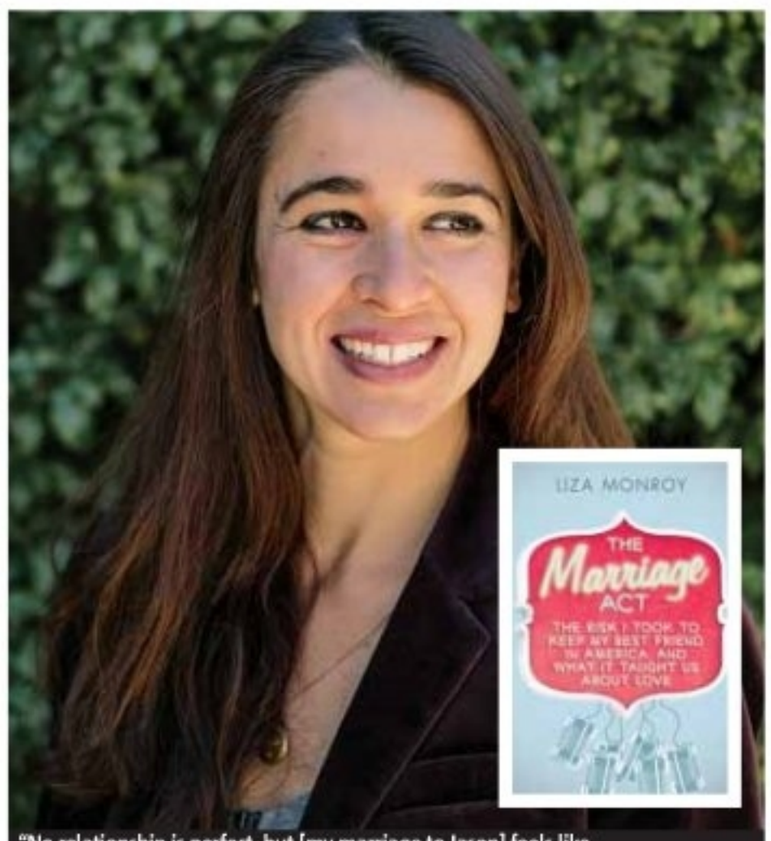
Be ready: "Get to a place in your life where you're completely fine on your own, so that you don't have expectations of a partner. Not that you shouldn't expect anything [in a relationship], but realize that you don't need someone to do things for you or make you feel validated. I finally decided I didn't need a relationship. If a guy showed up who fit into [my life], great; if not, I'm just fine on my own path. When he appeared, it was a nice bonus and surprise."

Be independent: "[Marriage] makes you more independent because you are joining forces with somebody; you always have a teammate. Knowing that someone has your back liberates you to take risks, pursue dreams and really just be who you are. If someone keeps you from doing the things you want, makes you claustrophobic or is possessive, then they're the wrong person for you."

Advice

Let go

"You can't control what another person thinks, does, feels — and shouldn't try to. That's why the best relationships are effortless, because you just let each other be, to grow naturally together instead of growing apart. Relinquishing control is an important clue that a relationship will last."



"No relationship is perfect, but [my marriage to Jason] feels like the right ending, where my story will no longer be that dramatic and interesting anymore," laughs Monroy. "It'll be day-to-day life: babies and grocery shopping and cooking and going to classes." /MATT EDGE

Present day

In her shoes

Although the nation's laws and attitudes toward the LGBTQ community are shifting (slowly) in a more tolerant direction, Monroy says if she needed to ensure Emir's security in the U.S., she would do it all over again. And, as she says in "The Marriage Act," one of her criteria for a partner is one who respects her decision to have married Emir.

So how did her new husband, Jason, react when she told him? Exactly as you'd hope: He said he would have done the same thing for his friend, too. She adds that it was the ultimate litmus test, confirming that he was the right guy for her. "He and Emir get along really well," she beams. "They're similar in that they're extroverted, thoughtful, witty people, so they really hit it off."

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‘A big thing that happened’ for the Avett Brothers

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Brotherly Love. Bassist Bob Crawford talks about what he considers to be the more important things in life.

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Bob Crawford, left, is back with the Brothers, Scott, center and Seth, right. / GETTY IMAGES

Bob Crawford is a gentleman. When asked about Mumford & Sons, the bluegrass-driven quartet that the Avett Brothers, the band in which he plays double bass, is most often and sometimes reductively compared to, he’s got nothing but positive things to say.

“They’re just great guys,” Crawford says from a stop on the road during a tour that will take the Avett Brothers across the country for the rest of the year. “It’s always good to see them and they are wonderful human beings and I think that all their success is deserved and earned and I can’t say enough good things about them.”

Don’t even get him started on Old Crow Medicine Show, the old-timey Nashvillians currently joining the Avett Brothers on tour.

“I could do years of touring with them and be so happy,” he says, before venturing into something akin to gushing. “Just beautiful guys, amazing show. I watched their show last night, they’re just awesome, I love ‘em. They’re great, I love playing with them, I learn a lot from them, they’re just great guys. I just really am thankful that we get to do this together. I mean, it took us 11 years for our bands to play together, and I’m just so sorry that it took so long to happen, because I don’t want it to stop.”

Crawford admits it’s relatively easy for he and the group to avoid dwelling on things like being repeatedly compared to Mumford & Sons: in the past three years, the group has been touched by tragedies like death, divorce and cancer, the latter of which his young daughter, Hallie, was diagnosed with in 2011. He took time off from the band to be with family, but returned in August 2012 once her condition had improved.

With the group reunited and back on the road, the Avett Brothers are playing some of the biggest venues their decade-plus career has seen yet.

“The toughest thing about a room like that is being able to maintain a connection with the audience and keeping the intimacy,” he says, adding that structuring the show, using strategic lighting and finding new ways to present old songs has helped them to do just that.

“A big thing that happened in 2013 is our band grew from four people on stage to six and sometimes we have seven people on stage,” he says. “Now we have this full band ... and that’s really giving us an opportunity to breathe new life into our whole material.”

KASIA PILAT
letters@metro.us

Looking forward

The long run

Fans can expect to hear plenty more new tunes from the hardworking group, but for now they’ll have to be patient.

“We are beginning the process of working on our next album as we speak as far as developing songs and kind of getting them to a finished kind of place,” says Crawford. “So we’re on the path. It’s gonna be a little while, but we’re on the path with the next record and we’re already working on those ideas and those songs as we speak.”

Crawford admits that it’s never easy to predict how recording a new album will go, but he says that he expects the group to have something ready by 2015.

“Don’t hold me to it, lots of things can happen between now and then and it could be 2016 by the time it’s all said and done, but I would say sometime in 2015 we’ll probably have another record at least ready to come out. It might not come out, but we should have one recorded by then.”

Also on stage

Swearin’

Saturday, 9 p.m.
Great Scott,
1222 Comm. Ave., Allston
$9, 21+, 800-745-3000
www.greatscottboston.com

Swearin’ are an immediately accessible punk-pop band from Brooklyn, marked by boy/girl vocal tradeoffs, wiry, slightly untamed guitars, offbeat but catchy hooks, an endearingly shambling group dynamic and an awesome mess of ’80s and ’90s influences both hip and defiantly unhip. Openers Potty Mouth are one of the Bay State’s best acts going. They’re an all-girl quartet who produce catchy, creative and above all smart tunes with a confidence that speaks to a level of self-awareness rarely seen in such young bands. Rounding out this bill are the Philly band Direct Effect and the more regional groups California X and Yale, Massachusetts.

Swearin’ are pictured here, hangin’. / PROVIDED

Also on stage

Slowdim

Saturday, 11 p.m.
Video Underground,
385 Centre St., Jamaica Plain
$5, 617-522-4949
www.thevideounderground.com

This bright local band plays a power pop that permits the mind to wander. There’s good sonic variety here, with gentle, dreamy passages giving way to big riffs and direct sentiments. MATTHEW DINARO

PLUS

On sale Friday

Mike Posner
April 1, Foundation Room at the House of Blues

Eugene Mirman Comedy Festival
May 1-4, The Sinclair and Berklee Performance Center

Hamilton Leithauser
May 15, The Sinclair

Morcheeba
May 20, Royale

Rufus Wainwright
June 18, Somerville Theatre

Rascal Flatts
With Sheryl Crow, Gloriana
June 21, Xfinity Center

Tori Amos
Aug. 15, The Opera House

Linkin Park
With Thirty Seconds To Mars, AFI
Aug. 16, Xfinity Center

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IN FAVOR OF SAVVOR'S SOUTHERN FLAVORS

Either I'm getting soft in my old age, or they're finally figuring out how to open decent bars in downtown Boston. My latest surprise, after Highball Lounge, is Savvor Restaurant and Lounge. Taking over the old District space, the Leather District locale (as no one actually calls it) is a curious mix between high concept Southern and Caribbean comfort food, and crafty cocktails.

While the bones of the place are similar, it looks more like District with a make-under, or after it got home and changed out of its clubbing clothes. It's got the feel of a nicer restaurant folded into a loft-like club, with beautiful hardwood floors, brick walls and creamy blue banquettes. There's very little window exposure, which is OK, because there's absolutely nothing to see out on the streets at night down here. That's a bonus, in my estimation. Any bar on a heavily trafficked street can do well, but they'll have to work a little harder here to get people out. I think it could work. It's the type of space that financial types nearby would go when they want to feel like they've got a little of their edge left, or worth a trip alone for fans of chef Carey Dobies, recently of UpStairs on the Square, who is doing crawfish hush puppies, crispy pig skin cracklins, fried quail, waffles and the like.

On the cocktail front, general manager Courtney McCall and team are having fun with an eye on classics and trends that should appeal to a drink-minded crowd. "We want to be able to appeal to a broad audience, trying to get the after-work crowd, but we also want to appeal to friends in the industry, to extend the late night menu and be that place when people get off work they can come in have a muffuletta and a beer and be taken care of like they do for everyone else," she says. The late night menu is open until midnight while the bar until 12:30 on weeknights and 2 on weekends.

"We're doing everything that I always wanted to do behind the bar," McCall continues. The focus is on bourbons and ryes, and, playing into the Southern and Caribbean tone of the cooking, plenty of rums.

Among the more notable drinks are a Flip n Stout, which combines Appleton 12-year rum, honey, lemon, egg white and Slumbrew Porter. "It almost has a dessert quality," McCall says. "It's got sweeter tones of the aged rum with the chocolate of the stout."

Another stand-out is the No. 2 cocktail, which infuses Plantation rum with anise, clove, cinnamon, then works in an apple shrub and soda. Just don't hold the name against them. "We're really good at making drinks," McCall says. "We're just no good at naming them."

Lydia Sosa mixes it up at Savvor. / DEREK KOUYOUMJIAN

If you go

Savvor Restaurant and Lounge

180 Lincoln St., Boston
857-250-2165
www.savvorbostonlounge.com

Thursty

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THEATER

'Merrily We Roll Along'

Through Saturday
Boston Conservatory,
31 Hemenway St., Boston
$25-$30, 617-912-9222
www.bostonconservatory.edu
Boston Conservatory presents this musical by Stephen Sondheim and George Furth, which moves backward from 1976 to 1957, detailing the career of a successful songwriter and film producer. Our hero is something of a sellout, and his life mirrors, to some extent, the unprecedented cultural upheaval of these two decades as the mood transitions from heady optimism to jaded cynicism.

MUSIC

The Spring Quartet

Thursday, 8 p.m.; Sanders Theater,
45 Quincy St., Cambridge
$40-$70, 617-496-2222
www.celebrityseries.org
Drummer Jack DeJohnette, saxophonist Joe Lovano, bassist Esperanza Spalding and pianist Leo Genovese comprise this jazz ensemble, traversing race, gender and age and demonstrating the power of music to render those very categories irrelevant. Of course, they didn't come together to make a social point — they just came together to make great music, and they will, no doubt.

Esperanza Spalding / PROVIDED

MUSIC

Hollywood Ending

Saturday, 1 p.m.
The Sinclair,
52 Church St., Cambridge
$16-$18, 800-745-3000
www.ticketmaster.com
The four fresh young fellas in the boy band Hollywood Ending create perfect teen pop music, laser-focused on busting the charts and stealing away all the screaming fans of Justin Bieber, One Direction, and the like. But what's remarkable is that they do it themselves — producing, writing, performing and releasing their own music with no help from the fatcats. Good luck, boys!

CONVENTIONS

Boston Flower and Garden Show

Wednesday through March 16
Seaport World Trade Center,
One Seaport Lane, Boston
$20, 800-258-8912
www.bostonflowershow.com
Whether you're a gardener who wants some expert tips for the upcoming season, or if you're just sick of winter and want to tide yourself over for spring by looking at gorgeous flowers, this expo should have just what you need, as the area's best vendors, growers and arrangers converge at the World Trade Center.

ART

'Reclamation'

Through April 25
The MALE Center,
571 Columbus Ave., Boston
Free, 617-450-1987
www.blaa.us
In observance of International Women's Day and Women's History Month, the Boston LGBTQIA Art Alliance presents this exhibition of works by six artists, all exploring female subjectivity. It's hardly a small or simple theme, and these artists passionately approach it from such a myriad of angles as to render it even more mysterious and intangible — as it should be. MATTHEW DINARO

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CLASSICAL MUSIC

Taras Shevchenko Bicentennial Celebration

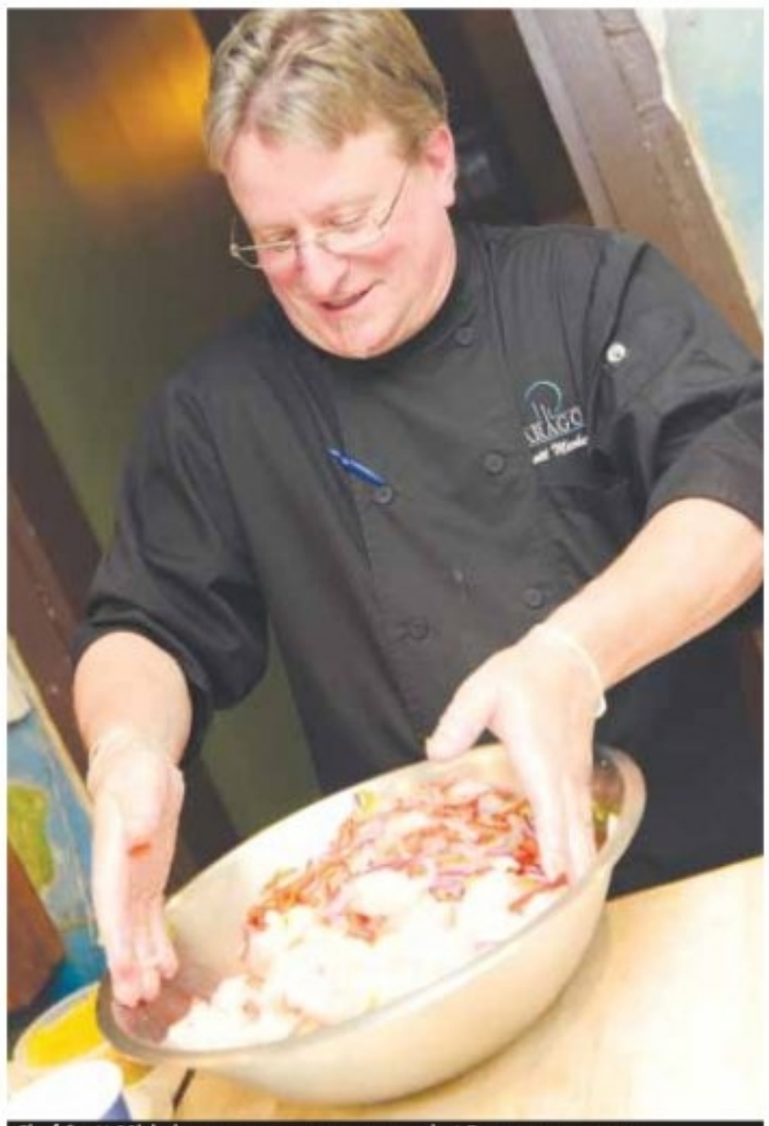
Saturday, 7-9 p.m.
The Edward M. Pickman Concert Hall, Longy School of Music,
27 Garden St., Cambridge
$20, 200shevchenko@gmail.com
www.shevchenko200.org
Commemorate the Ukrainian artist, poet and prophet whose work reflected mankind's aspirations for personal liberty and national independence. Like Shakespeare, Shevchenko is truly a man for all generations. **Featuring:** Eastern New England Ukrainian Joint Church Choir, Bandurist Julian Kytasty, Soprano Olga Lisovskaya and Actor: Antonio Stroud.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Bach and Byrd

Friday, March 14 at 8 p.m. and Sun., March 16 at 3 p.m.
Tickets start at $20
NEC's Jordan Hall, Boston
Box Office: 617-266-3605
H+H's superb chorus shines in a special program of sublime vocal works by J.S. Bach and William Byrd, celebrating their great vocal traditions of the 16th and 17th centuries. Come hear why Harry Christophers and the H+H Chorus are considered the finest in New England.

For advertising information please contact Carrie Meade at carrie.meade@metro.us


Chef Scott Mickelson prepares a savory meal at Paragon. / FOXWOODS

THIS IS NO GAMBLE: TASTE IS PARAMOUNT AT PARAGON

Winter is a time of reflection, which is possibly why it's awards season — not just for entertainment, but also restaurants. With restaurants, though, those stars, diamonds or other shapes are the most contentious of prizes. After all, one bon vivant's salty is another's bland. Like fingerprints, taste is individual.

Still, a great meal is a great meal. Paragon recently gained its eighth AAA Four Diamond Award of Excellence. Perched high above New England woodland on the 24th floor of Foxwoods's Grand Pequot Tower, this fine dining haven has casualized — just a tad. The room is still 1980s chic (oxymoron noted). Nevertheless, the dress code has loosened as a younger, jacketless clientele heads up there to eat.

Chef Scott Mickelson's menu is modernized and split mainly into small and big plates. Small plates are an opportunity for a chef to shine and create tantalizing dishes for diners to curate personal menus: Though the almighty trendy bacon bits and pieces, and the cheese plate (this one Connecticut-culled) are included, there's also a farrow pot that's luscious with chunky oxtail, diced turnip and celeriac.

Lentils du Puy — also known as the king of lentils — has hints of merguez sausage and tomato, plus carrots to sweeten the stew. Another small plate, shrimp and grits, includes crisped jumbos served over cheesy grits, which have a grainy texture, making them less puddingy than most of their Southern counterparts. To the Yankee, these grits are perfect.

Big plates include a 90-buck steak, which must be created from some holy cow or something. Seriously. If it's tastier than the more humbly priced short rib with wilted bok choy and a subtle lemongrass jus, then, wow, shine on with your crazy four diamonds.

If you go

Paragon

Entrees: $28-$90; Foxwoods Resort Casino, Ledyard, CT; 860-312-5130, www.foxwoods.com

Atmosphere

For the trees

With the clocks changing for spring, there's more opportunity to take in Paragon's calming views over the tree canopy. In the dark, there's barely anything visible outside. Inside, a fedora-wearing pianist looks so cool sitting alone at a piano, nimbly playing jazz (not the soft, pulpy background type). Win or lose in the casino, Paragon remains a winner.

NOSH ON
LINDA LABAN
linda.laban@metro.us

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Horoscope

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20. Opportunity is within reach. A partnership could prove to be beneficial. Be aware of your colleagues' ideas and intentions. A promising business prospect could result.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20. Be on the alert for valuable financial information. There is a possibility of advancement, or perhaps a new job, if you are able to utilize a choice tip.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21. You will face opposition if you are outspoken. There is nothing to be gained by antagonizing everyone around you. Be diplomatic and polite.

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20. Your plans for advancement will be given a big boost from people you have helped in the past. The generosity you've shown will be proof enough that you deserve rewards.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22. A partnership will flourish if given the chance. If you share your intentions, you will get the response you need to move forward in a timely manner. This could prove to be memorable.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22. Someone may be jealous of your achievements. Don't be influenced by the negative comments of others. You will get rewarding results if you continue on your chosen path.

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22. There is much to be gained through travel or educational pursuits. As your knowledge increases, more opportunities will become available.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22. You'll be overwhelmed with responsibilities. Don't allow self-doubt to prevent you from improving your prospects. Take the initiative.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21. It's a good day for you to deal with a disagreeable personal situation. You cannot protect someone's feelings. Honesty will be in your best interest. Delaying the inevitable will only compound the problem.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21. A promotion is within your reach. Your hard work and dedication will open the door to new job possibilities. Be prepared to jump at any opportunity that comes your way.

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan 20. Career and family commitments will be detrimental to your mental health. Take in some lighthearted entertainment, play a game or share laughs with a friend.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb 18. There is no good reason to get involved in someone else's argument. Regardless of the circumstances, refuse to take sides. BERNICE BEDE OSOL

Letters

Pushing for a paradigm shift

For all subway commuters: If you're sitting down on the train, let EVERYONE else who's been standing up get off the train before you stand up and get in their way. It's the least people can do as a common courtesy to the majority who have to stand up most days. STEVE HARDING, VIA EMAIL

Why Ukraine matters

The events in Ukraine matter to the U.S. — and here's why: Ukraine was a part of the old Soviet Union and gained independence when it disintegrated. At the time, Ukraine had about 1,800 nuclear weapons, making it the third-largest nuclear power in the world. Russia did not like its neighbor having nuclear weapons, so in 1994 an agreement called the Budapest Memorandum was reached between Ukraine, Russia, the U.S. and the U.K. It required Ukraine to give all of its nuclear weapons to Russia in return for an agreement never to invade Ukraine again. And the British and Americans gave a security assurance to Ukraine, agreeing to come to its aid if it were attacked by a nuclear-armed country. Now it appears as if Putin is unilaterally abrogating this by invading Ukraine. This is destabilizing for nuclear non-proliferation. There is no way Putin would try to invade Ukraine if it still had its nuclear weapons. The question is what will Obama do as respects the American security assurance to Ukraine? RON SHELTON, VIA EMAIL

RE: Take a cue from Russia (Metro, March 5). I must commend Mr. Mostonikas for his most insightful comments on the Ukraine situation and Metro for having the journalistic integrity to print them. It took courage on the part of both to speak truth in an increasingly hostile captured environment. LEWIS WALSH, VIA EMAIL

letters@metro.us

Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words. Metro reserves the right to edit all letters. Please include your name and contact info.

Sudoku: Easy and hard

		3					9	6
			7	2				
9	5				8	4	1	
5		1	8				4	
		4				2		
	9				4	6		8
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4	7					8		

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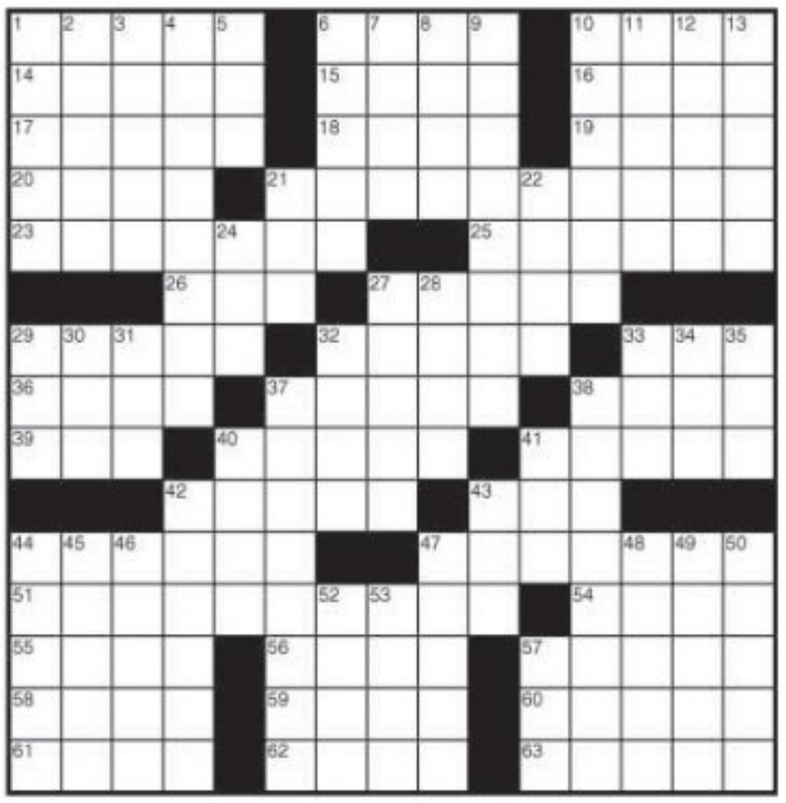
			5				7	
	8		9					2
4			1	7		2	6	9
	2	6				1	3	
7	9	1		3	6			5
1					9		5	
	6				4			
		3	6					

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Crossword

Across
1 Fog or steam
6 Tim of oaters
10 Big brass
14 Flee to the JP
15 Hound's trail
16 401(k) cousins
17 DeGeneres sitcom
18 Quote
19 Lectern's place
20 Leonine sound
21 Tortilla melt
23 Channels
25 Elegant
26 Gridiron stats
27 Big celebrations
29 Pith helmets
32 Gem surface
33 Badminton stroke
36 Mr. Baldwin
37 Double-daters
38 Party centerpiece
39 Boise's st.
40 Ravine
41 Ordinary language
42 Kickboxer Jean-Claude Van —
43 British runner
44 Kimono part
47 Feels the cold
51 Pine product
54 Astronaut — Shepard
55 Drury Lane composer
56 Weight deduction
57 Port near Kyoto
58 Like a peacock
59 Charles Lamb
60 Organic compound
61 Gazed at
62 Classroom fixture
63 Ebbets Field great

Down
1 Swerves
2 Mete out
3 — front or bear
4 Theatrical
5 Cartoon Chihuahua
6 Magician's first word?
7 Garfield's dupe
8 Realty offerings
9 Foot pedals
10 Straightens up
11 Where Asia begins
12 Hits eject
13 Ore analysis
21 Gal. parts
22 Mild expletive
24 Name tags, briefly
27 Dial
28 North-forty unit
29 "— -Pan" (Clavell novel)
30 Dilapidated
31 Green vegetable
32 Order blank
33 Philosopher -- -tzu
34 Rubber-stamps
35 Social insect
37 Stirred up
38 Glacial fissure
40 Handed over
41 Luau fare
42 Hinge on
43 Ernesto Guevara
44 Barrel slat
45 Virginia's — Caverns
46 Bert's pal
47 Kind of thief
48 Raise spirits
49 Garden tools
50 Pitfall, maybe
52 Poe offering
53 Rainbow goddess
57 Poet's contraction



Yesterday's answer

V	A	S	S	A	L	■	D	A	B	■	P	A	R	S
I	D	E	A	T	E	■	E	V	E	■	E	D	E	N
A	S	T	U	T	E	■	P	O	D	■	R	I	T	A
■	■	■	N	A	R	R	O	W	S	Q	U	E	A	K
S	M	E	A	R	■	E	R	S	■	U	S	U	R	Y
P	A	L	S	■	L	I	T	■	F	O	E	■	■	■
R	O	C	■	T	U	G	■	E	A	R	S	H	O	T
A	R	I	■	I	N	N	■	I	C	U	■	A	P	O
T	I	D	I	N	G	S	■	D	I	M	■	R	A	N
■	■	■	M	T	S	■	G	E	E	■	M	E	L	T
S	H	A	P	E	■	O	A	R	■	G	E	S	S	O
C	E	L	L	D	I	V	I	S	I	O	N	■	■	■
O	L	L	A	■	D	E	N	■	O	T	T	A	W	A
F	L	A	N	■	O	R	E	■	W	H	A	L	E	S
F	O	N	T	■	L	T	D	■	A	S	L	E	E	P

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NHL power rankings | by Rich Slate

No. 1

Ducks (43-14-5)

The Ducks have won both of their games since the Olympic break and three in a row overall. They didn't make any major deals at Wednesday's NHL trade deadline, but they did tweak their roster — dealing forward Dustin Penner, goaltender Viktor Fasth and acquiring defenseman Stephane Robidas. Anaheim is three points ahead of St. Louis in the vaunted Western Conference and leads the NHL with 91 points.

No. 2

Blues (41-14-6)

You could say that the Blues made the most important move of the trade deadline: grabbing goaltender Ryan Miller from Buffalo. It solves their one obvious weakness.

No. 3

Penguins (41-16-4)

GM Ray Shero usually makes notables moves at the deadline but took this year off. Shero has to feel comfortable with his current group.

No. 4

'Hawks (36-13-14)

As long as they don't suffer any major injuries to key players, the Blackhawks will still be an easy pick to win their second Cup in a row. They're simply coasting right now.

No. 5

Bruins (39-17-5)

The B's didn't do much to address their blue line issues at the trade deadline and they're early in an insane stretch of six games in nine days.

No. 6

Avalanche (40-17-5)

The Avalanche have won their last three games, proving that their pre-Olympic work wasn't a fluke. Still, it's hard to see this young team beating Anaheim or St. Louis.

No. 7

Sharks (39-17-7)

The Sharks didn't do much at the deadline. Their next three games are at home against probable East playoff teams: Pittsburgh, Montreal and Toronto.

No. 8

Kings (35-22-6)

No team in the NHL is hotter than the Kings as they won their last game before the break and have won their first four coming out of it. And they landed Marian Gaborik.

No. 9

Wild (34-21-7)

The Wild are right there with the Kings as they have also won five straight. They also acquired a proven goal-scorer in Matt Moulson from Buffalo.

No. 10

Canadiens (34-22-7)

No team pulled off a more stealth move than Montreal. At the last minute, they swooped in and picked up Thomas Vanek for a second-round pick and a prospect.

No. 11

Lightning (34-23-5)

Tampa Bay finally traded captain Martin St. Louis to the Rangers for their captain, Ryan Callahan. St. Louis is 38 and Callahan is 28. Not as lopsided a deal as it is on the surface.

No. 12

Maple Leafs (32-23-8)

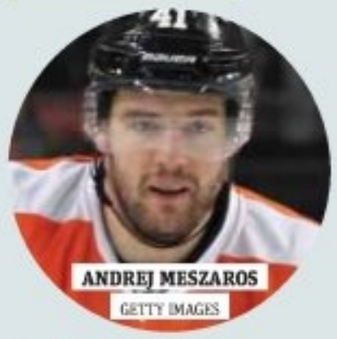
For the first time since 2006, the Leafs didn't make a deadline move, which is interesting considering they have plenty of holes to fill, namely on defense.

No. 13

Flyers (32-24-6)

The Flyers didn't grab the top trade headline but they made a solid move in trading for Andrew MacDonald in exchange for picks and a prospect.

Deadline dealing



Bruins deal for Flyers' Meszaros

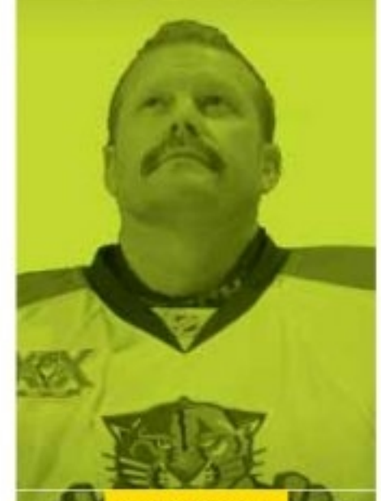
Philadelphia defenseman Andrej Meszaros was traded from the Flyers to the Bruins just prior to the 3 p.m. NHL trade deadline Wednesday in exchange for a third-round draft pick, according to multiple reports.

Meszaros was a teammate of Bruins captain Zdeno Chara for Team Slovakia in the Sochi Olympics, and Philly.com reported earlier this month that the B's leader gave Boston GM Peter Chiarelli a nudge in the direction of landing the 6-foot-2, 223-pound Meszaros. Meszaros was likely deemed expendable by Philadelphia after the Flyers acquired Islanders defenseman Andrew MacDonald Wednesday.

The 28-year-old Meszaros recorded five goals, 12 assists and was a plus-1 this season with the Flyers.

Boston has sought another defenseman since Dennis Seidenberg tore his right MCL and ACL in late December. **MATT BURKE**

3 SPORTS



Texas Timmy

Thomas on move again

Tim Thomas played his final game as a Florida Panther in Boston Tuesday night, a 4-1 loss to the team with whom he won a Stanley Cup in 2011. Thomas was traded from Florida to Dallas Wednesday in exchange for Dan Ellis. Thomas will likely back up Kari Lehtonen in the Stars' net.

NBA. Rondo was told beforehand staying in Los Angeles was bad idea

The latest and likely final twist regarding Rajon Rondo skipping a flight with the Celtics to Sacramento to celebrate his birthday in Los Angeles, is that the C's point guard apparently knew he'd be disciplined for staying in L.A.

"[Rondo] let Brad [Stevens] know and he let me know that he was going to stay in L.A. an extra day," Celtics president of basketball operations Danny Ainge told 98.5 The Sports Hub. "We didn't think that he should, but [told him], 'It's your choice and there may be consequences if you stay.' It's that simple." **METRO**

Rondo is averaging 11.6 points and 8.3 assists. / GETTY IMAGES

Medical Research

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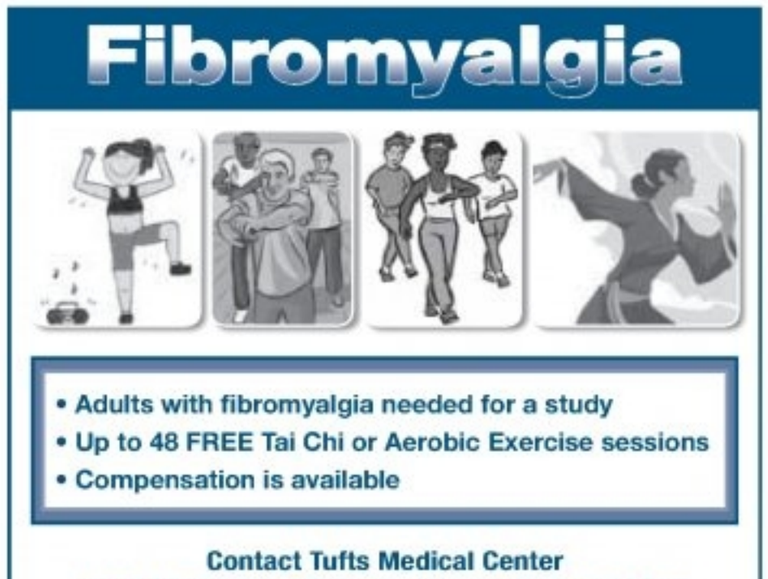
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